

SBA Disaster Assistance Approved for DeKalb, Etowah and Surrounding Counties

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley on Thursday announced that DeKalb, Etowah and surrounding counties have been approved for disaster assistance in the form of low-interest rate loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration. The approval is based on damage assessments from the March 18th storms.

“Cleanup continues in several communities, and this assistance from the SBA will go a long way in helping our communities recover,” Governor Bentley said. “There is help available for homeowners, businesses and nonprofit organizations that suffered damage from the storms. From the time the storms rolled through, to seeking today’s disaster declaration from the SBA, we have been working with affected communities and connecting them with any resource we can.”

DeKalb and Etowah counties are the two primary counties listed in the SBA disaster declaration that was approved Thursday afternoon. The declaration **also** covers counties that are contiguous to DeKalb and Etowah Counties. In Alabama, those counties are Blount, Calhoun, Cherokee, Jackson, Marshall and St. Clair. In Georgia, the contiguous counties are Chattooga, Dade and Walker.

Homeowners, renters, businesses and nonprofit organizations that qualify for assistance will have the following options from the SBA:

Home Disaster Loans:

- Renters and homeowners alike may borrow up to \$40,000 to repair or replace clothing, furniture, cars, appliances, etc., damaged or destroyed in the disaster.
- Homeowners may apply for up to \$200,000 to repair or replace their primary residence to its pre-disaster condition.

Business Physical Disaster Loans:

- Loans of up to \$2 million to repair or replace disaster-damaged property owned by the business, including real estate, inventories, supplies, machinery and equipment.
- Businesses of any size are eligible. Private, nonprofit organizations such as charities, churches, private universities, etc., are also eligible.

Economic Injury Disaster Loans:

- If a small business or private, nonprofit organization has suffered economic injury, regardless of physical damage, and is located in an SBA-declared disaster area, they may be eligible for financial assistance of up to \$2 million from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Those interested in applying for SBA low-interest rate loans can receive more information by calling the SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955 (or 800-877-8339 for the deaf and hard-of-hearing). Additional information, including SBA disaster loan fact sheets, can be found on the SBA's website at www.sba.gov.

"We appreciate the SBA's partnership, and we look forward to working with the SBA and our citizens as we recover from these storms," said Art Faulkner, Director of the Alabama Emergency Management Agency. "This assistance will greatly help families and business owners recover from the impact of the March 18 storms. We will continue to work with affected communities in any way possible."

Serve Alabama, the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Volunteer Service, continues to encourage storm survivors in need of assistance to call 211 (or 888-421-1266). Operators can give callers more information on recovery resources available in various communities.

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The Governor's Press Office can be reached at 334-242-7150.